



SENATOR RUNNER'S WEEK IN REVIEW

A WEEKLY REVIEW THAT WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED AND UP-TO-DATE



If you have been forwarded this message and would like to subscribe to future publications or you wish to no longer receive future publications please [contact me here](#).

Why California's Transportation System is Broken

Every Californian knows that our transportation system is broke. The answers are fairly simple, and they are displayed for all to see in "Time to Work," a recent report issued by the Public Policy Institute of California. What the report shows is that Californians almost exclusively drive to work, and, despite the investment of billions in federal, state, and local revenues to reverse the trend, they still do.

How California Spends Transportation Dollars

Transportation finance is a zero-sum equation, meaning that there is a limited amount of transportation funding and, for every dollar spent in one area, a dollar is not spent in another. The chart below indicates how people get to work, so common sense would tell you that must be where we are spending all our transportation dollars.

News of the Week

[Sex Offenders Fitted with GPS](#)

[Senate Votes for Local Control of Landfills](#)

[State's Credit Rating Gets First Boost in Two Years](#)

[State Expects to Appeal High School Exit Exam Decision](#)

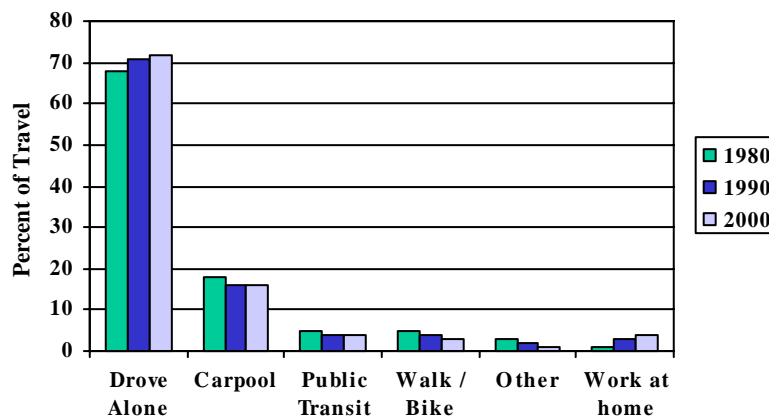
[Hesperia Will Receive Millions for Transportation in Bond](#)

[Leave Parenting to Parents](#)

[Latest UC Audit Reveals More Secret Deals Made](#)

[Dan Walters Column: November Election Will Offer Voters A Variety of Meaty Issues](#)

How Californians Get to Work



Unfortunately the liberal leadership in the Legislature continues to prioritize the limited state and federal transportation dollars in the wrong place. California spends roughly \$11 billion a year in state and federal dollars to fund transportation programs. Despite the fact that, as the PPIC data reflects, less than 5% of the public uses mass transit, it receives almost 40% of the funding.

In other words, California transportation planners and government officials are currently spending 40 cents out of every dollar that is invested in transportation to support facilities that are used by less than 5% of the public. Is it any wonder that California's freeways are choked with congestion?

Transit Investments and Traffic Congestion

There is a generally held belief among supporters of mass transit that rail transit helps to reduce congestion, a problem that -- according to the Texas Transportation Institute -- costs Americans \$60 billion in lost time and about 6 billion gallons of fuel every year. However, data from across the country seems to contradict this belief. Much of the growth in congestion across the nation is in precisely the areas that have invested most heavily in rail transit. Data in California confirms this phenomenon. Despite the fact that California has invested almost \$30 billion in federal and state transportation funds into transit between 1998 and 2004, the ridership has remained static, going from 1.2 to 1.25 million riders over a 7-year period. During the same period, vehicle miles traveled increased 290 billion miles to over 340 billion miles -- more than 50 billion miles.

Clearly, the investment in transit has not removed a significant number of commuters from the road system, and it is not significantly reducing the vehicle miles traveled. Transit proponents are undeterred by these figures and argue instead that investment in transit projects provides significant congestion relief by keeping commuters off the roads and highways.

Is the investment that California is making in transit cost effective? When calculating the cost of California transit systems, it comes to light that transit costs per trip averaged \$40.25. When multiplied out over an entire year, this represents over \$18,000 a year in direct subsidy per commuter. For that cost, it would be far cheaper to purchase a fuel-efficient sedan for every transit rider in California.

Conclusion

The California Legislature recently placed on the November ballot almost \$20 billion in transportation infrastructure bonds. If passed by the voters the bond would provide \$4.5 billion for highway projects, \$4.0 billion for mass transit, \$3.1 billion for trade infrastructure, \$2 billion for local streets and roads, and \$1 billion highway 99.

Republicans have argued for decades that California's transportation crisis is not the lack of funding, but a lack of vision. Despite the fact that over 90% of the population uses the roads and highways, California continues to spend 40% of every transportation dollar on a program that services less than 5% of its population.

The time has come not only to provide new investments into transportation, but new vision into how we address the transportation needs of California. It is high time that government follow the lead of its citizens and shift funding away from underutilized transit systems and into the expansion of California's roads and highways to address population growth and vehicle miles traveled. Expanding our roads and highways will reduce congestion on the roads and pollution in the air, and all at a fraction of what it would cost to deliver the same results through public transit.

If you would like to contact Senator Runner, please click here: [Email](#) - [Website](#)

OFFICES

Capitol

State Capitol, Room 4066
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-651-4017
Fax: 916-445-4662

Antelope Valley

848 W. Lancaster Blvd, Ste 101
Lancaster, CA 93534
Phone: 661-729-6232
Fax: 661-729-1683

Victorville

Victorville City Hall
14343 Civic Drive, First Floor
Victorville, CA 92392
Phone: 760-843-8414
Fax: 760-843-8348

Santa Clarita – San Fernando Valley – Ventura County

Santa Clarita City Hall
23920 Valencia Blvd., Suite 250
Santa Clarita, CA 91355
Phone: 661-286-1471 Santa Clarita Valley
Phone: 661-286-1472 San Fernando Valley & Ventura County
Fax: 661-286-2543